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ABSTRACT

The Binational Program promotes the continuity of education for approximately 45,000 students who migrate between Mexico and the United States each year, a pattern related to their parents' work as migrant agricultural laborers. Begun in California, the program now encompasses approximately 10 U.S. and 32 Mexican states (including the Federal District of Mexico City). A binational commission of representatives of these states developed the Transfer Document for Binational Migrant Students, a form containing demographic and educational information on binational students that is transmitted between the U.S. and Mexican schools that they attend. The Binational Program in California has played an important role in assisting schools in both countries to obtain, process, and transmit the transfer document for pupils. In the area of professional development, the Binational Program has collaborated with the Mexican Secretaries of Public Education and of Foreign Relations to provide summer inservice programs in which Mexican specialist teachers share information with U.S. teachers of migrant students concerning bicultural approaches, native language development, special needs students, and the Mexican school system; short inservice programs for individual districts during the school year; and ongoing teacher training courses in four "Centros Culturales" in California. In addition, the Binational Program has begun a pilot teacher exchange program between California and Michoacan (Mexico) school districts, and serves as a clearinghouse for Mexican educational materials and information on cultural events and educational opportunities. Includes the four-page Transfer Document and a chronology of the development of the Binational Program. (SV)

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CHAPTER 8

Migrant Education Binational Program

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In the United States, the Binational Program operates as part of the U.S. Department of Education's Migrant Education Program. It grew from the efforts of a California teacher, who decided to make contact in 1976 with educators in the Michoacán (Mexico) village that was home base for many of her students (see chapter 9 for the full story). Twenty years later, the Binational Program affords 45,000 migrant students the opportunity to continue their education regardless of the country in which they are residing by advocating for appropriate grade-age placement, transference of course credits, school enrollment opportunities, and outreach to increase parents' understanding of the need to enroll students in both countries. This chapter describes the Binational Program from the perspective of the California Migrant Education Program and includes a chronology of its development.

The Binational Program was established by the Migrant Education Program of the California Department of Education (CDE) to coordinate specialized educational projects between the United States and Mexico. The Binational Program focuses generally on migrant students but most specifically on the significant number of binational students, who, as

an annual pattern connected to their parents' agricultural labor demands, spend part of the school year in one country and part in the other. Based on information gathered through the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), an average of 45,000 pupils and their families migrate between Mexico and the United States in any given school year. The Binational Program is located in the offices of the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools in Camarillo and consists of a director (Gildardo Villaseñor) and clerical support.

Currently, the Binational Program is involved in the areas of (1) transfer of scholastic records and policy considerations, (2) professional development, (3) teacher exchange, and (4) information and materials clearinghouse. Each of these components is described in this report.

Transfer Document and Policy Consideration

The Binational Commission includes representatives from the state educational agencies (SEAs) of approximately 10 U.S., more than 32 Mexican states (including the *Distrito Federal de México)*, and the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*. One of the primary purposes of the commission has been to develop, revise, and promote the use of the Transfer Document for Binational Migrant Students (see sample copy at the end of this chapter). This document contains demographic and educational information on binational pupils that is intended to support continuity of schooling experiences as students migrate between U.S. and Mexican schools on an annual basis. Representatives of the Commission have agreed to use the document within their jurisdictions. The Binational Commission meets twice yearly, once in Mexico and once in the United States, to monitor and evaluate the use of the transfer document. The U.S. subcommittee of the Binational Commission also has two independent meetings annually.

More recently, the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (Dirección General del Programa Para Las Communidades Mexicanas en el Extranjero) has lent its support to the commission. Orientation is provided to Mexican consular officers in the United States, enabling them to advise binational migrant families of the need to obtain a copy of the transfer document for each of their children.

The Binational Program in California plays an important role in assisting schools in both countries to obtain, fill out, process, and transmit the transfer document for individual pupils.

Finally, from time to time, the Binational Commission has served as a forum for discussing important policy issues regarding the education of binational students. For example, based on the recommendations of the commission, the Secretaría de Educación Pública issued an advisory directing school districts in Mexico to normalize enrollment until the beginning of the next school term or even until the next school year.

Professional Development

The Binational Program has been instrumental in arranging summer in-service programs for U.S. teachers serving significant populations of migrant students. With the assistance of the Secretaría de Educación Pública, SEAs from states such as Michoacán and several Migrant Education Service regions have worked together to develop and implement intensive summer in-service programs of several weeks' duration. These sessions have been conducted for the last several years and are now implemented in more than five Migrant Education regions.

These in-service programs provide a setting where Mexican specialist teachers can share information with U.S. teachers regarding (1) bicultural approaches, (2) native language development, (3) special needs students, and (4) the Mexican school system. In many cases, the in-service sessions are coordinated with Migrant Summer School programs so that the Mexican educational specialists can work directly with migrant students and, at the same time, conduct demonstration classes for their U.S. teacher counterparts.

The Binational Program has collaborated with the *Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores* in conducting short-term in-service programs for individual school districts and Migrant Education Service regions during the regular school year. These sessions are usually coordinated with local Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs). In this way, the Mexican specialists, often renowned educators, are able to make staff development presentations to groups of teachers, university student teachers, Mini-Corps tutors, and college and school district teacher trainers.

The *Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores*, through four *Centros Culturales* in California, also works with the Binational Program to provide ongoing teacher training courses that address such issues as Spanish language acquisition, bicultural studies, and C-BEST preparation. The purpose of the staff development sessions is to support classroom teachers in obtaining their B/CLAD (Bilingual/Cross Cultural Language and Academic Development) credential from the Commission for Teacher Credentialing.

Teacher Exchange Project

The Binational Program, in cooperation with the SEA in Michoacán, is involved in a pilot teacher exchange program in the Lynwood School District in Los Angeles County and the Salinas Unified School district. At this time, approximately 15 Mexican teachers are assigned in team teaching situations as a way to address the bilingual and bicultural instructional needs of migrant and other pupils. Based on the results of the pilot project, which will be reported in an evaluation study, both the value and nature of the project will be reviewed by the California Department of Education (CDE), the Binational Program, and other migrant education agencies.

Chronology of Binational Program Developments

In the mid-1970s, educators in Pajaro Valley Unified School District (Santa Cruz, California) became aware that a large number of children in their schools all came from Gómez Farías in Michoacán, Mexico. These students spent from 1 to 6 months in Gómez Farías (usually from November through April) but were denied access to the schools because they were in California with their parents who were employed in agriculture when the school year began in September each year.

1976 A Pajaro Valley (CA) district administrator asked teacher Arlene Dorn to find out about the schools in Gómez Farías. Dorn takes up the challenge while in Mexico to study, and begins making contacts. Dorn meets Profesora Irene de la Llata de Anzaldúa, a principal in the American School in Mexico City, who becomes her collaborator. After meeting with a national administrator of elementary education, a regional order is issued to allow migrant children to attend school while in Michoacán.

They travel to Gómez Farías in Michoacán and establish ties with teachers and administrators there and with regional administrators.

1977 Dorn returns to Pajaro Valley school district and begins the Gómez Farías-Pajaro Valley Project, supported by the California Migrant Education Program and her district superintendent. Purposes of project were to begin a collaboration for planning and information exchange collaboration between the two school systems, and thereby develop a model that could be replicated in other California communities.

The first student academic information transfer document is developed and put into use in both communities.

1979 The project loses local district financial support; Dorn seeks private support and secures funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The fiscal agent became the superintendent of Butte County (CA) Schools, under the auspices of Mini-Corps, a migrant-related program.

The effort is renamed Project MEDIR (Migrant Education Data International Record), and Dorn begins publicizing the needs of binational migrant students and promoting collaboration and use of the transfer document at meetings across California and through federal migrant education meetings.

1980 Dorn conducts a survey of school districts in California and based on the results provides the first research-based estimate of the number of binational migrant children in California: 20,000. Participation in Project MEDIR spreads to other California districts and even more extensively in Mexico.

1984 Project MEDIR again loses its fiscal home and is adopted by La Cooperativa Campesina, a statewide farmworker organization located in Sacramento (CA), with funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Adriana Salinas Simmons takes over as director.

1986 In January, the first Binational Conference is held in San Diego, California. Eighty-nine educators from Mexico and California attend to promote understanding of the two educational systems, jointly identify solutions to needs of migrant children, and further the development of the Binational Transfer Document.

In July, the second Binational Conference is held in Morelia, Michoacán, and is attended by California and Mexican educators. This meeting results in the further development and use of the new Binational Transfer Document, and the Mexican government issues an official order to enable migrant children to enter Mexican schools regardless of their time of arrival anywhere in Mexico.

Semiannual meetings in Mexico and the United States continue to take place from this time to the present.

1987 The Binational Program was officially moved into the auspices of the California Migrant Education Program through the San Diego (Region 9) County Office of Education. Efforts to expand involvement in the program continue.

1991 By this date, Colorado and Arizona have become collaborating states in the United States, along with the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Baja California in Mexico. Under the directorship of Sheli Cunningham, an informational video is produced in both English and Spanish.

1992 By this date, seven more states have joined the effort: Michigan and Oregon in the United States, and Sonora, Jalisco, Estado de Mexico, Chihuahua, and Zacatecas in Mexico.

1996 Today, 10 U.S. states, all 31 Mexican states, and the federal district of Mexico City have joined participation in the Binational Program. An official Transfer Document (see copy reproduced in this chapter) has been adopted and disseminated by the Mexican government through its consulates in cities throughout the United States.

An average of 45,000 binational students are expected to migrate between Mexico and the United States during the 1995-96 school year.

(This chronology was based on information provided by Arlene Dorn, Praxedes Martinez, Adriana Salinas Simmons, and Gildardo Villaseñor.)

—Patricia Cahape Hammer

Information and Materials Clearinghouse

Through the *Centros Culturales* and the 10 Mexican Consular offices located in California, the *Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores* has worked with the Binational Program to facilitate the acquisition and use of Mexican educational materials at U.S. schools that enroll large numbers of binational students. For example, one project identifies local schools for receipt of a mini-bibliotecas (small libraries) of grade level-appropriate books in Spanish. Another project provides textbooks and other supplemental books to school libraries and classrooms. The *Centros Culturales* often sponsor cultural presentations (music, plays, puppetry, and films) of interest to schools. The Binational Program, through the various Migrant Education Regional offices, disseminates information regarding these events and other related opportunities. For more information, contact Gildardo Villaseñor, 5189 Verdugo Way, Camarillo, CA 93012: phone (805) 383-1924, (800) 451-9697, FAX (805) 383-6973.

DOCUMENTO DE TRANSFERENCIA

DEL ESTUDIANTE MIGRANTE BINACIONAL

MÉXICO • EUA

PRIMARIA

1° a 6° GRADO

TRANSFER DOCUMENT

FOR BINATIONAL MIGRANT STUDENT

USA • MEXICO

ELEMENTARY

1-6

SEP Sistema Educativo Nacional

Migrant Education

9

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ASIGNATURAS COURSES	PROMEDIO DEL PERIODO QUE REPORTA GRADE POINT AVERAGE OR PARTIAL GRADE	OBSERVACIONES OBSERVATIONS
ESPAÑOL SPANISH		
INGLES ENGLISH		
MATEMATICAS MATHEMATICS		
HISTORIA HISTORY		
GEOGRAFIA GEOGRAPHY		
EDUCACION CIVICA CIVICS		
CIENCIAS NATURALES NATURAL SCIENCES		
EDUCACION FISICA PHYSICAL EDUCATION		
EDUCACION ARTISTICA ARTISTIC EDUCATION		

	SUGERENCIAS SUGGESTIONS

ESCALA DE CALIFICACIONES
GRADING SCALE

NOTACION NOTATION	INTERPRETACION INTERPRETATION		
0 5 9	F	DID NOT PASS	NO PROMOVIDO
6	D	NOT SATISFACTORY	PROMOVIDO
7	C	AVERAGE	
8	B	GOOD	
9	A	VERY GOOD	
10	A+	EXCELLENT	

INFORMACION SOBRE EL PROGRAMA BINACIONAL PARA ESTUDIANTES MIGRANTES
INFORMATION ABOUT THE BINATIONAL PROGRAM FOR MIGRANT STUDENT

EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: EN LOS CONSULADOS MEXICANOS
EN EL PROGRAMA BINACIONAL TEL 1 800 451 9697

EN MEXICO: EN EL AREA DE CONTROL ESCOLAR DE LA SECRETARIA DE EDUCACION U ORGANISMO PUBLICO DESCENTRALIZADO UBICADA EN LA CAPITAL DE CADA ESTADO

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GRADO
GRADE

PERIODO ESCOLAR
SCHOOL YEAR

PERIODO QUE REPORTA
REPORTING PERIOD

DEL FROM — DIA DAY — MES MONTH — AÑO YEAR

AL TO — DIA DAY — MES MONTH — AÑO YEAR

NOMBRE DE LA ESCUELA
NAME OF SCHOOL

DOMICILIO
ADDRESS

CIUDAD
CITY

MUNICIPIO
COUNTY

ESTADO
STATE

ZONA ESCOLAR
DISTRICT

CODIGO POSTAL
ZIP CODE

INFORMACIÓN DEL ESTUDIANTE/STUDENT INFORMATION

NOMBRE COMPLETO DEL ESTUDIANTE COMO SE UTILIZA EN MEXICO
STUDENT S NAME AS USED IN MEXICO

FECHA DE NACIMIENTO (DIA-MES-AÑO)
DATE OF BIRTH (DAY-MONTH-YEAR)

SEXO
SEX

NOMBRE DEL PADRE O TUTOR (APELLIDO-NOMBRE)
FATHER S NAME / GUARDIAN (LAST-MIDDLE-FIRST)

NOMBRE DE LA MADRE O TUTORA (APELLIDO-NOMBRE)
MOTHER S NAME / GUARDIAN (LAST-MIDDLE-FIRST)

LEGALIZACIÓN/LEGALIZATION

NOMBRE Y FIRMA DEL PROFESOR O DIRECTOR / TEACHER S OR PRINCIPAL S NAME AND SIGNATURE

12

SE SANCIONARA A QUIEN CON DOLO O FINES LUCRATIVOS REPRODUZCA TOTAL O PARCIALMENTE ESTE FORMATO